

## CHRISTIANITY'S BIRTHPLACE

BY H. S. HILLS

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At Batavia, N. Y., April 17, 1906. Rev. Algonzo S. Crapey for 33 years rector of St. Andrew's Episcopal church at Rochester, N. Y., was tried for heresy because he denied the divinity of Christ. Yet, Saint Augustine, Bishop of Hippo Regius, states (Sermons 37, chap. 12), that "From the first some believed Christ to be God and not man. Others believed him to be only a man and denied his divinity."

The former was the opinion of the Manichees to which belief St. Augustine himself adhered. Coterminous in answer to Ignatius' Epistle to the Trallians, assures us that "the doctrine that Christ's body was a phantom only, and that no such person as Jesus Christ ever had any corporeal existence, was held in the time of the Apostles themselves."

And from the Apostolic age down through all the centuries, has the existence of Christ as a man been denied; not by enemies or unbelievers, but by the most learned, the most sincere and the most moral of those who profess the Christian name. In John's Epistles (1st, 4th, 3rd; also 2nd, 1st, 7th) admitted by many modern authors to have been written many years before any of our canonical gospels. Mention is made of persons professing the Christian faith, who taught that a belief that such a man as Christ ever lived in the flesh, was no part of that faith.

Such deniers of the humanity of Christ taught that he was only an ideal character personified; and regarded the whole gospel story as a sublime allegory. "In this class," the very first in point of time and always first in number—was found the most intelligent of professing Christians. In the second and less important class was found those who denied the divinity of Christ and declared him only human." (Taylor's Synagoga). The Nicene Council (A. D. 325) joined the two beliefs and gave to the world our modern orthodox creed.

The first three New Testament books—Matthew, Mark and Luke—are called Synoptic Gospels, and are very much alike. In many chapters there is such a close verbal agreement that the texts of Matthew and Mark might pass for one and the same. Rev. Moses Hull says (Biblical Encyclopedia, page 278): "There are only 24 verses in Mark that can not be found in much the same language in one of these other gospels."

In view of this undisputed fact the most eminent critics of the past century have been agreed in the opinion that one of two suppositions must be true, viz: Either these three gospel writers copied from each other or that they each copied from some previously written narrative. The notion of independence, in the composition of these three gospels, is no longer tenable. No scholarly Christian would admit that these gospels were copies of each other, hence the second supposition must be absolutely true. Admitting this to be correct—as do the most learned and profound of the literati—the reader will naturally ask: From whence came this previously written narrative from which the gospel Evangelists drew their inspiration, and so copiously copied? The answer shall be: From Egypt, as the following quotations from the most eminent ecclesiastical writers will testify. It is conceded by all modern theologians that the base of all our information regarding the origin of the gospels, is found in the writings of Origen (3rd century), and Eusebius Pamphilus (4th century), supplemented by writings of the Apostolic Fathers and of the Christian apologists, whom these two above mentioned prolific writers largely quote. Moreover, it should never be forgotten that for 1500 years no ecclesiastical historian has pretended to have any other information than is found in the writings of the above mentioned authors—infinity the ablest Christianity has ever produced. Therefore, without exception, all begin where Eusebius leaves off.

"Without Eusebius," says the learned Tillenont, "we should scarce have any knowledge of the history of the first ages of Christianity, or of the authors who wrote in that time. All of the Greek authors of the fourth century and since have begun where Eusebius ended."

Our first witness shall be Bishop Melito, of Sardis, Lydia, supposed by many to be "the angel of the church of Sardis," mentioned in the Book of Revelation. In his ever memorable letter of apology, delivered A. D. 170, to the Emperor Marcus Antoninus, he says: "For this philosophy, or religion, which we teach, truly flourished aforesaid among the barbarous nations; but having blossomed again, or been transplanted in the reign of thy great ancestor Augustus." And he claims the Emperor's patronage, "on account of its great antiquity—as having been imported from country lying beyond the limits of the Roman Empire in the reign of Augustus, who had found its importation ominous of good fortune to his government."

In 141 A. D., Justin Martyr, in his letter of apology, addressed to "Emperor Antoninus Pius, most noble Caesar and true philosopher," says: "If then, we hold some of the opinions near of kin to the poets and philosophers in greatest repute among you, why are we thus unjustly hated? When we say all things were made in this beautiful order by God, what do we say more than Plato? By opposing the worship of the works of men's hands, we only contend with Menander; and by declaring the Logos the first begotten of God, we say no more than what you say of the sons of Jove." And these comparisons are continued for several pages, to demonstrate that the Christian philosophy, or religion, was NEW ONLY IN NAME, and that it was identical with the true teachings of the Pagan religion.

The beginning of the third century introduced Origen (born 185, deceased 254), the most learned and distinguished personage in the entire drama of Christian evidence. Origen was born and brought up in Egypt, and was educated in the University of Alexandria, under the instruction of the learned and justly celebrated Ammonius Saccus, from whose teachings Origen formulated his own views of morals and religion, as set forth in his apology in his reply to Celsus, viz: "Christianity and Paganism, when rightly understood, differ in no essential points, but have a common origin and were one and the same thing. Nothing but the schismatical trickery of fanatical adventurers has introduced a distinction, where in reality there was no difference."

In reply to the charge of Celsus that the Christian religion had no more foundation upon which to base its truth than had any of the Pagan beliefs. Origen replies, not by attempting to offer any proof, but by saying: "I answer that we who see plainly the advantage the common people do reap therefrom, I say we (the clergy) who are so well advised of these things, do teach men to believe without examination as to the foundation of the faith."

Our next witness is the most important, the most positive in statement that we have yet introduced, and one who, himself, presents undeniable testimony concerning the inquiry as to the origin of our gospels. It is Eusebius Pamphilus (260-340), Bishop of Caesarea, and the most distinguished of all ecclesiastical historians. Let all the other witnesses hide their diminished heads. In second volume, chapter 17, of Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History may be found this passage: "The ancient Therapeutae were Christians, and their sacred writings were our gospels." In vol. 2nd, chap. 16, he proves the assertion true by testimony which cannot be invalidated, viz: By quoting many pages from the writings of Philo Judaeus, who wrote a treatise on the beliefs, habits and customs of the Therapeutae in Alexandria, Egypt, showing that they had sacred writings called "Gospels of the Egyptians," and a well established church organization, with colonies or branch churches in Rome, Ephesus, Corinth, Philippi, and in all places mentioned by St. Paul in his "Epistles to the Churches."

This writer also states (as quoted by Eusebius) that they also had monasteries monks and nuns, bishops, priests and elders, etc. In fact, they had an old and well established church organization in all its plenitude and power.

Philo Judaeus, or "Philo the Jew," as every student of history knows, was contemporary with the great Augustus Caesar, the first Roman Emperor. He was about 20 years of age at the time Jesus Christ is reputed to have been born. Moreover, the immortal Gibbon, in his "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," says: "It has been proven that Philo's treatise on the Therapeutae was written during the reign of Augustus." And as the great Augustus deceased A. D. 14, these churches to whom St. Paul wrote his Epistles, and this old and well-founded church organization of which Philo wrote and so minutely described as having a University at Alexandria, and bishops, priests, elders and deacons, all must have been fully established when Christ was not more than ten or twelve years of age at most. And all based and founded on the sacred writings of the Therapeutae, called "The Gospel of the Egyptians." All this from the great Eusebius, based on the testimony of Philo Judaeus. Higher or better authority no man can quote. Yet strange as it may seem, Philo in his treatise has never once mentioned the name of Jesus Christ, nor has he intimated that he had ever heard of such a man.

The above statements are all admitted by Mosheim (1694-1755), the very foremost of modern ecclesiastical historians. He says: "The Therapeutae Church and University of Alexandria were flourishing when Christ was on earth and long before that date."

The eminent English ecclesiastical, Dr. Nathaniel Lardner (1684-1768), in his "Credibility of the Scriptures," quotes largely from Eusebius, and commenting on same, says: "It is peculiar that Eusebius, at so early a date, should call the Egyptian Therapeutae Christians," though they taught the same doctrine.

To show how the modern lesser lights of the Christian Church have viewed this most important question, we submit the following: In 1444 Caxton published the first book ever printed in England. In 1474, in a convocation of the clergy, the Bishop of London said: "If we do not destroy this dangerous invention, it will one day destroy us." Compare this with Pope Leo X's avowal in the College of Cardinals, 1515: "It is well known how profitable this fable of Christ has been to us." See also the frank statement of Rev. Wm. Paley, D. D., Archbishop of Carlisle, 1782: "We cannot afford to have a consequence in church affairs. We must support the gospel because the gospel supported us."

Vol. 1, chap. 2, Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of Rome," says: "All religions in the Roman world were believed as equally true by the people, as equally false by the philosophers, and as equally useful and profitable by the priests and magistrates."

Having presented abundant testimony to prove that the original of our gospels was "The Gospel of the Egyptians," we must now, in order to more fully demonstrate the proposition, examine critically some of the passages of our New Testament gospels and epistles; as to the time when written, to whom addressed, and to what scripture these passages refer. Ecclesiastical writers mostly agree that no one really knows the author of any one of our canonical gospels, nor when they were written.

Bishop Faustus, A. D. 384, says: "It is an undoubted fact that the New Testament gospels were not written by any of the Apostles, but a long while after by some unknown persons."

Rev. Moses Hull's Biblical Encyclopedia, and Dr. Chadwick's Bible of Today, both present arguments showing that neither Matthew, Mark, Luke nor John were written prior to the last half of the 2nd century. (See also the New International Encyclopedia.)

However, wishing to be absolutely fair in our statements, we waive the above arguments, and append the table of dates as compiled by Dr. Nathaniel Lardner in his famous treatise on the Credibility of the Scriptures, thus showing from the highest ecclesiastical authority when

each book is supposed to have been written.

	A. D.
Matthew	64
1st and 2nd Thessalonians	52
1st and 2nd Corinthians	56 and 57
1st and 2nd Timothy	56 and 61
Ephesians	61
Philemon	62
Hebrews	63
1st and 2nd Peter	64
1st St. John	80
The Revelations	95 or 96
Mark	64
John	68
Galatians	52
Titus	56
Romans	58
Colossians	62
Philippians	62
St. James	62
St. Jude	64 or 65
2nd and 3rd St. John	80 or 90
The Acts	63 or 64
Luke	63 or 64

From this table of dates, when compared with Gibbon's statement that Philo's treatise was written during the life of the great Augustus, it follows that it must have been written more than fifty years before any of our canonical gospels.

We quote again from chapter 16, Book II, of Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History, concerning the Therapeutae whose "Gospel of the Egyptians" was our gospels. Also, observe a few of our New Testament passages as compared with the Therapeutic doctrine, viz: "So at the same time they declare their renunciation of all their property and divest themselves of all revenues of their estates. Having laid aside all anxieties of life, their property was sold and divided among all, so that there was not one among them that had want."

Compare this with Acts 4th, 34th: "Neither was there any among them that lacked; for as many as were possessors of houses or lands, sold them and brought the price of the things that were sold, and distribution was made unto every man according to his need."

Again, Eusebius says: "As he (Philo) has written in so many words: 'Neither would they eat any thing that had blood in it, that water only was their drink.'" See Acts 15th, 29th: "That ye abstain from meats and from blood and from things strangled."

Again Philo says: "For this race of men are found in all parts of the world, and the best men betake themselves to these colonies of the Therapeutae; in each of which they have sacred edifices and monasteries, in which the monks perform the mysteries of the sublime life. For those who preside over their scriptures philosophize upon them, expounding their literal sense by allegory. They have also the writings of the first leaders of their sect, and records of the meanings conveyed by those allegories."

Compare this with the universally preached gospel as set forth in Colossians 1st, 23d: "The gospel which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven, whereof I, Paul, am made a minister." (For deacon, the very lowest order among Therapeutic officials) and with Galatians 4th, 24th, "which things are an allegory." Again, "He (Philo) describes the orders of preference among those who aspire to ecclesiastical ministrations. The office of deacon, the humblest rank, and the supreme authority of the bishops."

Compare this with 1st Timothy, 3d, 13th: "For they that have used the office of deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree." Also Philippians 1st, 1st: "Paul and Timothy, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints with the bishops and deacons." Also Hebrews 13th, 7th: "Remember them that have rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God." Also Hebrews 13th, 17th: "Obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as one that must give an account."

(Continued Next Week.)

### BOONE CO. FAIR.

Florence (Erlanger), Ky.

Round trip tickets via the Queen & Crescent Route, will be sold Sept. 1, 2 and 3, good returning until Sept. 4, 1910. Round trip rate from Lexington to Erlanger, Ky. for this occasion is \$2.40.

Many a heart-reaching sermon preached on Sunday in fashionable churches has been manufactured on Saturday evening in some upper attic, under the influence of a pot of ale, the remains of a ham bone and a short black "clay."

## JESUS CHRIST OF THE FOUR GOSPELS

### No Evidence That He or the Twelve Apostles Ever Lived

(By Ernest Pack.)

Whether Jesus Christ of the Four Gospels ever existed is the question we propose briefly to examine, and space being limited we have none to waste by way of preamble. We seek to save the reader's time and trust we shall not be considered abrupt because we are direct. We even expect a little credit for our consideration.

First, then, by Jesus Christ of the Four Gospels, we mean not some fanatical man—Christ or crafty impostor who may have claimed for himself divine honors, but the said-to-be immaculately born Son of the Virgin Mary, and miracle-working God-man—this, and no other. It is necessary to be very particular upon this point, for there have been many Saviours, both before His reputed time and since. Saviours to right of us, Saviours to left of us, Saviours all round us, as one might say. And although the same claims are made for them all, Christians would have us believe that their Jesus only is genuine and the others are spurious. Well, in our mustard-and-cress days we were wont to hold the same opinion, and it will be our duty to give a few reasons why we renounced it.

We found (1) we had been bamboozled into believing by faith, instead of by facts. (2) That contemporary history had nothing to say about this mythical personage. (3) The Christians had done their best to rectify this misfortune by forging the missing testimony. (4) That no evidence was forthcoming that any such persons as the twelve Apostles ever lived. (5) That no trace of our four Gospels could be found prior to about 150 A. D., and (6) we thought that had the miracles ever taken place during the active life of Jesus (31 to 33 A. D.), there would have existed ample records of them in the historical accounts of that period, and we looked upon this solemn silence on the part of every contemporary writer, as conclusive testimony in confutation of the Christian legend.

We reflected also that one little grain of evidence traceable to the first half of the first century would have been of greater value than whole granaries of assertions made in the latter half of the second century. Then there was presented to us the fact recorded by Gibbon, that in Rome, Christianity was rejected "as an idle and extravagant opinion by every man of a liberal education and understanding." (Decline and Fall, chap. xv.) We observed likewise that "both parties" (Christian and pagan), "seemed to acknowledge the truth of those miracles which were claimed by their adversaries; and while they were contented to ascribing them to the arts of magic and to the powers of demons, they mutually concurred in restoring and establishing the reign of superstition." (Ibid, chap. xvi.) And the same great scholar sagely remarks in a footnote that: "It is seriously to be lamented that the Christian Fathers, by acknowledging the supernatural, or as they deem it, the infernal part of Paganism, destroy with their own hands the great advantage which we might otherwise derive from the liberal concessions of our adversaries." (Ibid.). Further, we noted in the pages of this noted writer that those among the Romans "who condescended to mention the Christians, considered them only as obstinate and perverse enthusiasts who exacted an implicit submission to their mysterious doctrines without being able to produce a single argument that could engage the attention of men of sense and learning." (Chap. xv.)

These truths we read, and many others, and they burst upon us like a revelation, while the belief of our youth was shaken mightily, yea, even to its very foundations—and after that, the earthquake! Down fell the whole edifice of our faith, and there we stood looking on with mixed feelings of annoyance disappointment and regret, for we received in our youth a very pious training and were ill prepared for such disquieting discoveries. But the facts were too strong, and forced upon us the conclusion that we have been grossly deceived. There can be no doubt that all Christian teaching has been anticipated by other masters long prior

to the time that Christ is said to have lived, as a study of comparative religious amply proves, and religious parallels everywhere abound. Here, for instance, is a list of crucified Saviours who were all good enough to die for us before Jesus thought of doing so:

Chrishna of India, 1200 B. C.  
Sakra, of Hindustan, 600 B. C.  
Thammuz, of Syria, 1100 B. C.  
Wittoba the Telingonese, 522 B. C.  
Iao, of Nepal, 622 B. C.  
Hesus, of Great Britain, 834 B. C.  
Quexalcote of Mexico, 587 B. C.  
Quirinus of Rome, 506 B. C.  
Prometheus of Greece, 547 B. C.  
Thulis of Egypt, 1700 B. C.  
Indra, of Thibet, 725 B. C.  
Alcestis of Greece, 600 B. C.  
Atys, of Phrygia, 1170 B. C.  
Crite, of Chaldea, 1200 B. C.  
Bali of Orissa, 725 B. C.  
Mithra of Persia, 600 B. C.  
Salvagna, of Bermuda; Osiris, of

Egypt; Horus of Egypt; Odin of Scandinavia, Zoroaster of Persia; Baal, of Phoenicia; Bali, of Afghanistan; Xamolxis, of Thraee; Zoar of the Bonzees; Adad of Assyria; Deva Tat of Siam; Alalides, of Thebes; Mikado of the Sintoos; Beddin of Japan; Thor, of the Gauls; Cadmus of Greece; Hii and Feta, of the Mandaites; Gentaut, of Mexico, etc., etc.

We should think that after knowing of all these human sacrifices, Christians will feel more important; than ever. They may find the various histories of these obliging gentlemen in a work by one Kersey Graves, entitled "Sixteen Crucified Saviors." Also they may consult "The Hind, Pantheon, Mexican Antiquities," Higgins' "Anacalepsis, and the Progress of Religious Ideas," all strongly recommended by the clergy.

The present following of the principal among these Saviours is: For Chrishna, 400,000,000 (for Christ, 200,000,000); for Mahomet 150,000,000; for Confucius 126,000,000; and for Mithra 50,000,000. So that there still remains much missionary work to be done.

History repeats itself especially religious history. Take, for example, the accounts of Chrishna and Christ, which furnish a striking illustration. It is said of Chrishna that his birth was foretold; that he was an incarnate god; that his mother was a virgin; that he had an adopted father who was a carpenter; that there was rejoicing on earth and in heaven on his birth; that his mother's name was Maia; that he was born on Dec. 25th; was visited by wise men and shepherds who were led by a star; was warned by an angel of danger, that all children were ordered to be destroyed in order to include him; that his parents fled to Mathura; that he had a fore-runner; that he was wise in his childhood; was lost and searched for by his parents; had other brothers retired to solitude; fasted; preached a noteworthy sermon; was entitled Savior and Redeemer; existed prior to his birth; and on earth and in heaven at the same time; was both human and divine; worked miracles; read thoughts; ejected devils; had apostles; reformed the existing religion; was poor; was conspired against; denounced riches; was meek; unmarried and chaste; merciful; associated with sinners and was rebuked for it; befriended a widow; met a woman at a well; submitted to insults and injuries; was a philanthropist; had a last supper; was crucified between two thieves; darkness supervened; he descended to hell; was resurrected, and after three days seen by many people! And all this, 1200 B. C.!

With regard to prophecies, we have the coming to earth foretold of others besides Chrishna and Christ, as, for example, Chang-Ti, Osiris, Cadmus, Quirinus, Quexalcote, and Mahomet, and Messianic prophecies are to be found in the "Vedas," the Chinese sacred books, and in those of Egypt, Greece, Rome, Mexico, Arabia and Persia. There are also many other "odious" comparisons. Osiris is spoken of as having bruised the serpent's head after it had bitten his heel; Hercules is represented with his heel on a serpent's head, Chrishna is pictured and sculptured in the same way, and Persia has the same old legend. Miraculous conceptions are recorded of Plato, (who was said to be a son of Apollo); of Zoroaster; of Mars and Vulcan; of Quexalcote; of Suchiquelqual; of Yu; of Appolonius; of Buddha; of Mahamaya; of Chrishna; of Yasuva; and—incidentally, of Jesus!

Of virgin mothers, we have Yasoda, the mother of Chrishna; Maia, of Sakla; Celestine of Zulis; Chimaleon of Quexalcote; Semole of Baeebus; (Continued on fourth page.)